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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3880
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2600
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1954
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0037
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 4078
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5673
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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 001591

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TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#) [SN](#)

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN PRT: NO SINGAPORE COMBAT FORCES, BUT
EXTENDING CURRENT SUPPORT "DOABLE"

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, a.i. Daniel Shields. Reasons: 1.4 (a)
(b)(d)

11. (C) Singapore will not send combat personnel to Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan, MFA Second Permanent Secretary Bilahari Kausikan told EAP DAS Scot Marciel and the Ambassador during an August 24 meeting. It would be "politically impossible" to do so, Kausikan asserted. Singapore has a conscript army specifically for homeland defense and the GOS would not be able to explain to the public a deployment of combat personnel to Afghanistan. In the past, Singapore had selected non-conscript army regulars for a peacekeeping mission in East Timor and had only been able to justify the mission on the grounds that East Timor was right on Singapore's doorstep. The deployment of the army regulars, who ordinarily focus on training of the conscripts, had caused immense disruption to the rest of the army.

12. (C) DAS Marciel cited recent comments by Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew that the United States must "stay the course" in Iraq and Afghanistan. Reinforcing recent messages delivered to the Singaporeans in Washington, he urged that Singapore do more to provide assistance in accomplishing that mission. Kausikan responded that Singapore had deployed medical and engineering teams for three months each to support New Zealand's PRTs in Afghanistan. He affirmed that extending this type of commitment was "doable" and that Singapore would consider other requests for support that were "realistic." Asked by the Ambassador if Singapore would increase the number of personnel serving in the PRTs, Kausikan said he was unable to answer at this time.

13. (U) DAS Marciel cleared this message.

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